



South Texas Archeological Research Services, LLC
Cultural Resource Managers & Archeological Contractors
FRIENDLY PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

December 9, 2004

Ms. Kay Hindes, Archeologist
City of San Antonio Planning Department
Historic Preservation and Design Division
1901 South Alamo Street
San Antonio, Texas 78204

Re: Letter Report of Findings for Initial Cultural Resource Survey of New Leaf Homes Grissom Trails Subdivision

Dear Ms. Hindes:

On December 8, 2004, South Texas Archeological Research Services, LLC (STARS) conducted the above-referenced survey according to requirements of the City of San Antonio historic codes and *Archeological Survey Standards for Texas, Minimum Survey Standards* of the Texas Historical Commission (THC). The project area consisted of the footprint of the proposed new Grissom Trails single-family residential subdivision near the intersection of Grissom and Culebra Roads in San Antonio, Texas, and included about 57.319 acres. The area was flat to gently rolling and the majority of the area was being actively cultivated. Several large fields within the area had just been disk plowed and surface visibility within them was about 80 percent. We estimate that these fields comprised about 75 percent of the project area. The remainder of the project area was heavily vegetated with mesquite, huisache, and hackberry trees, yaupon, persimmon, spring herald, agarita, and similar woody understory shrubs, and a thick mat of native grasses, vines, and weeds. The greenery reduced pedestrian and vehicular access and ground surface visibility to zero for purposes of conducting a cultural resource survey.

The survey included a 100-percent pedestrian examination of the surface to the extent feasible based on surface visibility, excavation of five backhoe tests along the northern border of the property, and photographic documentation and preliminary measurements of the ruins of a small dairy barn, corral, and cattle water trough on the property. Based on the results of five geocores previously excavated within the project area and the excellent surface visibility in plowed areas, shovel testing was not included in the survey. A search of the THC's internet Sites Atlas conducted just prior to the survey indicated that the project area contained no previously recorded archeological sites and had not been previously investigated. With the exception of the dairy barn on the property, no cultural resources were encountered during the survey and no artifacts or other items were collected or curated.

The dairy barn consisted of a rectangular-shaped core original building approximately 24' x 50' in size and an apparent addition on one short side of the original building that was also rectangular in plan with dimensions of about 16' x 20'. Both the original structure and the addition had wood-framed sides and roof above a concrete block perimeter half wall. Roofing and exterior siding on both components consisted mostly of corrugated tin sheeting. Interior stud walls were surfaced with plywood. The original building and its addition apparently were stick built (not prefabricated) using standard Western framing consisting of 2" x 4" stud walls and 2" x 6" gabled roof trusses. All of the lumber in these components appeared to be modern-milled, nominal-sized lumber rather than full dimensional lumber and round wire nails, rather than square nails, were used as fasteners. A United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service (SCS) aerial photograph of the project area and vicinity taken in about the mid 1960s shows that the project area was then almost entirely in cultivation. Although the photograph does not have particularly good resolution, apparently the dairy barn was present when the photograph was taken.

The corral south of the barn consisted of a four-foot-tall wood-post-and-slat or wire fence and loading chute, most of which was heavily overgrown and dilapidated, which precluded accurate determination of size and configuration. The water trough, which was just south of the barn and corral, was entirely of poured-in-place concrete and measured about 8' x 12' in plan by 32 inches tall. The walls and floor of the trough were about one foot thick.

Based on these construction and stylistic attributes, we estimate that the barn, addition, corral, and watering trough all originated after about 1940. Most of the original barn building was substantially collapsed, but the addition retained basic structural integrity. These components were open and unsecured at the time of the survey and the exterior siding and roofing were dilapidated. The concrete watering trough was intact and very well preserved.

In our opinion, none of these structures are architecturally remarkable. No archival and historical background research was conducted regarding these structures, but in our opinion their location and general context make it very unlikely that they have any important historic associations that would make them eligible for designation as City of San Antonio landmarks or heritage properties, as state archeological or historic landmarks, or as National Register properties.

The *SCS Soil Survey of Bexar County* shows that surface soils within the project area are of the Lewisville, Venus, and Trinity/Frio associations. Lewisville and Venus soils are typically relatively underdeveloped shallow clays and clay loams that originated in place over limestone or caliche parent materials within non-riparian areas. Trinity/Frio soils consist principally of relatively young clay loams and silty clay loams that have been deposited along drainages. The geocores excavated within the project area generally indicated the presence of clay topsoils over clay subsoils and caliche throughout the project area. Three of the five backhoe tests excavated within the project area in conjunction with the cultural resource survey of the area encountered as much as several meters of thick, dark gray-brown (10YR3/2) clay topsoils and lighter-colored (10YR4/4) clay subsoils over caliche bedrock (10YR6/6). The other two backhoe tests encountered approximately the same topsoil over the same caliche bedrock found at depths of about 30-40 centimeters below the surface. These findings supported the basic validity of the geocore data. In spite of the close proximity of a segment of Culebra Creek near the northern and eastern boundaries of the project area and the fact that several prehistoric archeological sites were recorded along the creek within a few kilometers of the project area, apparently the project area contains no prehistoric sites.

Given these findings, South Texas Archeological Research Services, LLC, recommends to the City of San Antonio Planning Department, Historic Preservation Office, that the New Leaf Homes Grissom Trails Subdivision project should be allowed to proceed as currently planned without additional cultural resource compliance requirements except where any cultural resources not encountered during the survey are subsequently discovered. We believe that the above-described standing structures are not worthy of any historic designations or preservation for historic interpretation and that demolition of the structures should probably be allowed. On behalf of New Leaf Homes, we request your concurrence with these findings and recommendations.

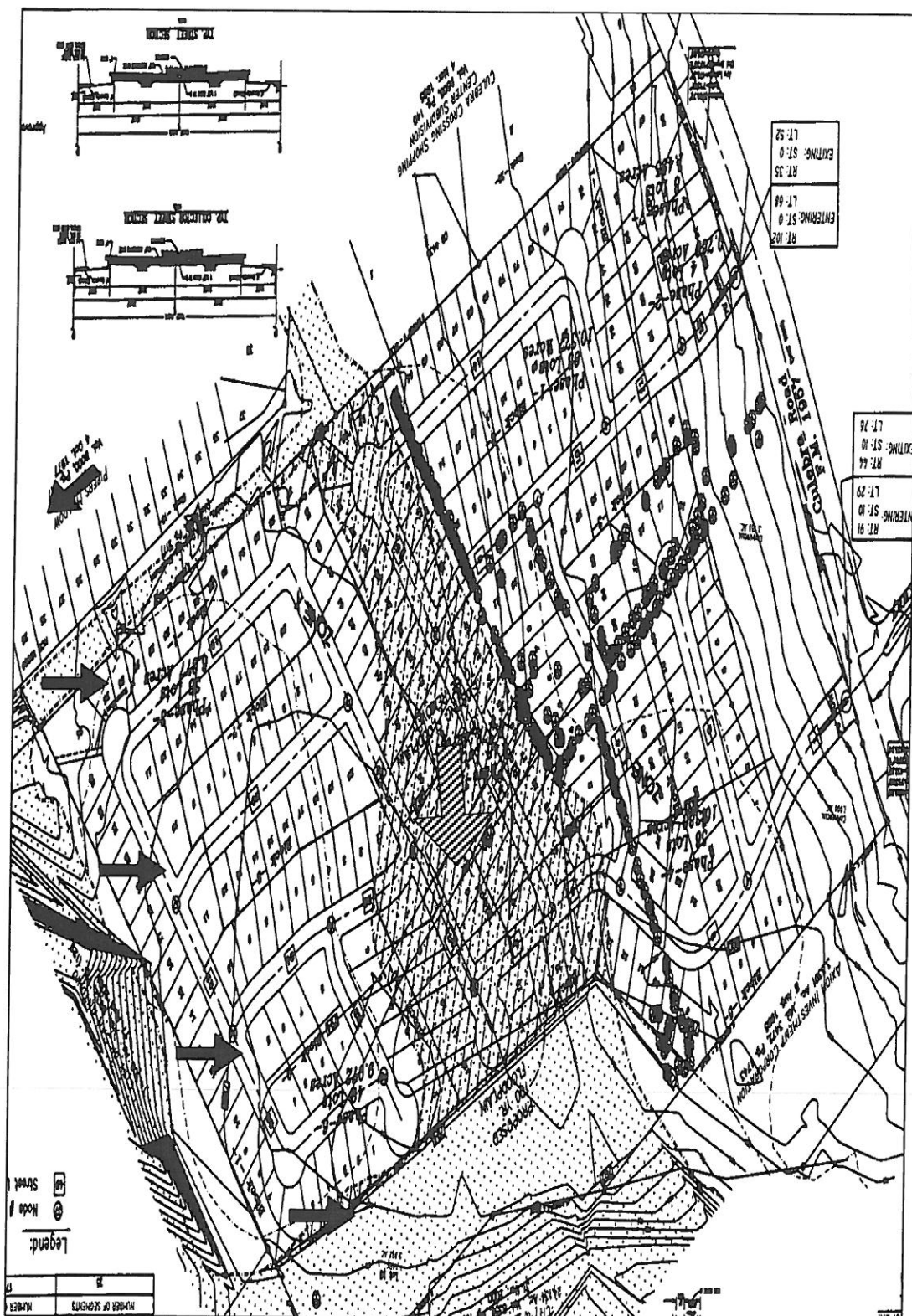
The accompanying map shows locations of the backhoe tests we conducted within the project area. Photographs taken during our survey of the backhoe tests and of the standing structures within the project area are also attached, along with a key to the photos. If you have any questions, please contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

Herbert G. Uecker, Cultural Resources Director

encl: project area map
photos of structures and photo key

cc: Mr. Fred Ghavidel, New Leaf Homes



Approximate locations of archeological backhoe tests (at tips of black arrows; L-R: 1-5) and barn complex (at tip of hatched arrow) within Grissom Trails Subdivision Project Area. North is toward top of image.

Key to Attached Digital Photographs

Accompanies Letter Dated December 9, 2004, from South Texas Archeological Research Services, LLC, to City of San Antonio Planning Department, Historic Preservation and Design Division, Regarding Cultural Resource Survey of the Grissom Trails Subdivision Project Area

| Email Tag | Subject |
|---------------------|---|
| GrissomTr04 003.jpg | Backhoe Test 1 |
| GrissomTr04 005.jpg | Backhoe Test 2 |
| GrissomTr04 008.jpg | Backhoe Test 3 |
| GrissomTr04 011.jpg | Backhoe Test 4 |
| GrissomTr04 016.jpg | Backhoe Test 5 |
| GrissomTr04 012.jpg | East Façade of Barn |
| GrissomTr04 013.jpg | Close-up of East Façade of Barn and Interior Feeding Stalls |
| GrissomTr04 014.jpg | North Façade of Barn from NE Corner |
| GrissomTr04 017.jpg | North Façade of Barn and Addition from Northwest Corner |
| GrissomTr04 018.jpg | West Side of Addition |
| GrissomTr04 019.jpg | South Side of Addition and Barn from Southwest Corner |
| GrissomTr04 020.jpg | South Side of Addition and Barn |
| GrissomTr04 021.jpg | Interior of Addition from North Side |
| GrissomTr04 022.jpg | Concrete Water Trough South of Barn |





















